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The Little Mermaid Returns

Pictures & Story By: Lady Barbi Gunhilt

A Hans Christian Andersen Fairytale Continuation

Lollipop Books

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Fiction

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For my dear mother, "Mutti" Mrs. Eva Wanda Emilie Kundig, of Santa Barbara, California, who noticed that when she went into the Santa Barbara Children's Library little children looked for "little books" for their little hands. This, then, is a little book.

It was in the Year of our Lord. The centuries had flown. The aqua waters still washed against the massive rocks, witnessing shipwrecks and havoc; saffron water lilies sat, row upon row, in the smaragdine sea. The Little Mermaid's time was now up, she had become an angel. She asked God for special permission to fly back down to earth to see how things had changed. "Yes, you may". Answered God, "but only for a short time. You will know in your heart when the time is right to fly back to heaven. But you will be invisible, because you are an angel." The Little Mermaid thanked God, and planned with great excitement for her trip back down to earth.

All of the angels helped her to clean her pure silver wings, but warned her to expect humans to be less than perfect. "Remember", the head angel told her, "your mermaid sisters are now nothing but the foam in the deep blue ocean." The Little Mermaid had heard that there had been wars, people were fighting, the world was much more complicated then it used to be. They had organizations like the United Nations, where people tried to talk over their differences instead of fighting.

The Little Mermaid kissed all the angels, thanked God again, and started on her long flight down to earth on a milky cloud. The cloud gave her a her a little boost toward earth, and it was fun to sit and feel as light as air. She could also see her Sisters or the Air, who still had more time to serve, as their 300 years weren't up yet. Beneath her, she glimpsed the breathtakingly beautiful round ball in space - the wonderful Planet Earth. As she looked at the moon, she saw a man there - a man, in some

kind of spacesuit, who was riding some kind of buggy, and keeping busy picking up moon rocks. Another man left a flag up there with lots of stars and stripes. The Little Mermaid smiled to herself, and thought that mankind had come a long way since she was a real mermaid, down on earth, not an angel like she was now, and playing with her five sisters underneath the deep blue sea in her garden, and enjoying her family's castle. She could see all of the majestic oceans of the world, its mountains, and the highest mountain, Mt. Everest. Men were busy trying to climb it. It was like she herself was riding in space, it was simply wonderful.

She saw so many things. In one country, people were fighting. She always felt bad when she saw people fighting, for some of them were very young, and almost as handsome as her prince had been. She prayed for all of them. On the high seas, ships were travelling, and many ships of big nations watched each other. She had heard that people observed each other now because everyone had different ideas on how to run the world. They were all intent on running the world in their own way.

The Little Mermaid, who was now an angel, decided to fly down to the United States, which had become the first nation in the world to land a man on the moon. She wanted to see what kind of a country the United States was. From high above, the pea green dots, ferries, glided smoothly in the deep waters. Farther on down, more dots - black dots of surfers in their shiny surf suits threw images of picturesque minispots back to the sky, as they rode surfboards in the blue Pacific. On the East

Coast the Statue of Liberty raised its hand up into the heavens to welcome people from all over the world into New York Harbor.

The Little Mermaid longed to see her sisters, even though they were Mermaids no longer, and decided to fly over Denmark. She could not visualize them, but could feel them whisper to her, even though they were nothing but foam in the ocean now. She thought she could hear them chant "we are everywhere now, we love you," and could somehow feel their presence, even though she saw nothing but the foam in the ocean. Waves pounded shorelines all over the world, people lived different and talked different and acted different. Everywhere she looked she saw tall buildings. People rode in what was called a car, and there were also trains, busses and very few people now rode on horses except "cowboys."

Mankind had made tremendous advances in many fields. In Antarctica, she had heard that man had found moon rocks from the moon. Much good happened everywhere, and much evil. A family was laughing in an amusement park. An old couple clasped each others' hands. But children were still children, just liked she remembered from so long ago. She marveled at all the changes that had taken place, when she was still a mermaid, seated next to her prince, before he married the lovely princess, and before she had lost her beautiful voice to the mean sea witch.

From far away, she glimpsed her sea castle underneath jade green waters, and echoes of the most exquisite sound she had ever heard it felt like

they were calling her home, the voices of her descendants. Six mermaids were still dancing to the sea urchins and oysters, with merman in the castle. An elegant ball was in progress, and it seemed to her that times had never changed, but in her heart she knew they had. No one could see her for she was invisible, as she tenderly kissed them all. At Copenhagen's sea entrance, there was her very own statue, and she wanted to cry with joy. She saw many people in mansions, seated comfortably at big tables. In other places, people lived in tiny shacks with hardly enough food to eat, which made her sad.

The Little Mermaid longed to help, but couldn't and it was God's wish. But she decided to be vary brave, for she was just one little angel. Also it had been her decision to some down to earth, the angels had warned her that mankind was not perfect and fought over space and food.

People talked into funny black instruments called telephones, There was television, a big screen with picture images, and people went to movies. Movies were an even bigger screen with picture images. But no matter what inventions mankind had thought of people basically remained the same. Mankind fought, loved, squabbled, meditated, and sometimes even tried to be understanding. The Little Mermaid, who was now an angel, loved all humans.

She felt for them. Sometimes it was almost too much, for she knew so much, and couldn't do anything, she just had to be brave and suffer quietly. She wondered why mankind acted the way

mankind did. Medicine had already found ways for people to love longer. The Universe was being explored for more space. The Little Mermaid, who was now an angel. Always knew that you had to suffer for something you really believed in, and that one person, even one angel was very important.

The Little Mermaid saw the oceans swirl; giant hurricanes were in progress, mountains erupted. The Little mermaid enjoyed most peering at the world from her incredible vantangepoint in space - earth, the most beautiful round colored ball revolving in space on its own axis. She hoped mankind would work things out, and they would, but it would take years until a United World emerged in the 21st Century and the fighting would stop. For a brief period in time, there would be space wars, but they would be stopped, for mankind knew they had to get along or perish. The Universe would be put to incredible new uses for the good of all.

The Little Mermaid, who was now an angel with silver wings, grew lonesome. She heard God calling her back to heaven, and she had to fly back, the angels needed her. She put her blessings on earth, and somehow knew everything would be allright. Heaven waited for her, as the angels flew forward to greet her with love.

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Barbi Gunhilt with her mother Eva Pawlik Grundmann Kundig of Santa Barbara at Santa Barbara, California mid 1980's

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